

Message Text

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ACTION HA-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 5062

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: UNHCR MEETING OF COUNTRIES OF TRADITIONAL IMMIGRATION

REF: (A) STATE 38351 (NOTAL); (B) KUALA LUMPUR 902 (NOTAL)

1. PARA 28 OF REF A URGED THE EARLY CONVENING IN BANGKOK OF A MEETING UNDER UNHCR AUSPICES TO COORDINATE THIRD COUNTRY RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS. WE RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH A MEETING WITH GILBERT JAEGER OF UNHCR GENEVA DURING THIS RECENT VISIT TO BANGKOK. WE HAVE ALSO DISCUSSED THE ISSUE WITH LESLIE GOODYEAR, THE UNHCR REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE HERE.

2. JAEGER HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT HOLDING SUCH A MEETING IN BANGKOK ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT MIGHT BE OFFENSIVE TO THE LAO GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE UNHCR ALSO HAS A REPRESENTATIVE IN LAOS. GOODYEAR HAS ALSO BEEN LUKEWARM ON THE IDEA. HE SAYS, CORRECTLY, THAT THERE IS ALREADY CLOSE
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DAY-TO-DAY COORDINATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE COUNTRIES THAT ARE TAKING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF REFUGEES. ADDITIONALLY, HE IS ADDRESSING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMON MARKET IN BANGKOK FEBRUARY 21 ON THE SUBJECT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND, AND WOULD AT THAT TIME BE REACHING THOSE COUNTRIES THAT HAVE TAKEN, OR MIGHT TAKE, MORE

MODEST AMOUNTS.

3. GOODYEAR NEVERTHELESS OFFERED TO ARRANGE FOR A MEETING IF WE WANTED TO EXPLAIN IPP-78. WE REPLIED THAT SINCE IPP-78 CONCERNS ONLY BOAT CASES, AND THAILAND'S OVERWHELMING REFUGEE PROBLEM IS IN THE INLAND CAMPS, THAT SUCH A MEETING MIGHT BETTER CONCENTRATE ON INLAND CAMP REFUGEES. GOODYEAR THEN SAID THAT AFTER THE HIGH COMMISSIONER MADE HIS VISITS TO THE US, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, AND NEW ZEALAND, THE OCCASION FOR SUCH A MEETING MIGHT ARISE.

4. COMMENT: THE MISSION ENJOYS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH GOODYEAR, AND FINDS HIM MORE DYNAMIC THAN HIS TWO PREDECESSORS COMBINED. WITHOUT ANTAGONIZING HIM, WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT URGE GENEVA TO SEE WHETHER GOODYEAR COULD CONVENE A MEETING ON INLAND CAMP REFUGEES SOONER THAN HE CURRENTLY INTENDS. EARLY INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ON THIS PROBLEM COULD SUPPLEMENT IRC COMMISSION EFFORTS TO ADDRESS IT (SEPTTEL), AND RESPOND TO CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN BROADER INTERNATIONALIZATION.

6. REF B SPECIFICALLY MADE THE POINT THAT FREQUENT MEETINGS AT FIXED INTERVALS WOULD LOSE THEIR PUNCH. WE WOULD THUS RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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IN PROMOTING SUCH MEETINGS, NOT RECOMMEND THAT THEY "BE HELD FAIRLY FREQUENTLY," AS MENTIONED IN REFTTEL A.
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